

## Artículo de investigación

**FINE ARTS STUDENTS' VIEWS ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS**

OPINIONES DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DE BELLAS ARTES SOBRE PROBLEMAS AMBIENTALES  
VISÕES DE ALUNOS ESTUDANTES DE ARTES SOBRE PROBLEMAS AMBIENTAIS

Recibido: 19 de febrero de 2019. Aceptado: 22 de abril de 2019

Written by:  
Murad Allahverdiyev (Corresponding Author)<sup>114</sup>

**Abstract**

The aim of this research was to specify Fine Arts students' behaviors towards environmental problems and the affecting factors. 25 volunteer Fine Arts students participated in this study where a qualitative research model was used. A semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool. The findings obtained were analysed through descriptive and content analysis.

In the research it was noted that the participants related environmental problems with human factor and added that they were fully aware of the main reasons for environmental problems. While expressing their future vital future worries, the participants put forward several suggestions to do with environmental preservation. The results of this research indicated that the Fine Arts students had an average behavior level towards the environment.

**Keywords:** Environment, environmental education, environmental problems

**Resumen**

El objetivo de esta investigación fue la de especificar los comportamientos de los artesanos para los problemas de los problemas y los factores relacionados. En el presente estudio, se utilizó un laboratorio cualitativo de laboratorio. La semiestructura se formó como una herramienta de colección de datos. Los resultados obtenidos se analizaron a través de descriptivos y análisis de contenido.

En la investigación se ve que los componentes relacionados con problemas relacionados con el factor humano y que se basó en que eran plenamente conscientes de las principales razones para los problemas ambientales. Mientras que expresa su futuro futuro futuro worries, los participantes se ponen en marcha varias veces a través de la preservación de la preservación. Los resultados de esta investigación indican que los estudios de la industria cinematográfica tenían un comportamiento promedio del comportamiento para el entorno.

**Palabras claves:** Medio ambiente, educación, problemas

**Resumo**

O objetivo desta pesquisa foi especificar os comportamentos dos alunos de Belas Artes em relação aos problemas ambientais e aos fatores afetantes. Participaram deste estudo 25 alunos de Belas Artes voluntários, nos quais foi utilizado um modelo de pesquisa qualitativa. Um formulário de entrevista semiestruturado foi utilizado como ferramenta de coleta de dados. Os achados foram analisados por meio de análise descritiva e de conteúdo.

Na pesquisa observou-se que os participantes relacionavam-se a problemas ambientais com fator humano e que estavam plenamente conscientes das principais razões para os problemas ambientais. Ao expressar suas futuras preocupações vitais futuras, os participantes apresentam várias sugestões relacionadas à

---

<sup>114</sup> Near East University, Education Science Faculty, Mersin 10 Turkey.  
Email: murad.allahverdiyev@neu.edu.tr

preservação ambiental. Os resultados desta pesquisa indicaram que os alunos de Belas Artes apresentaram um nível médio de comportamento em relação ao meio ambiente.

**Palavras-chave:** Meio ambiente, educação ambiental, problemas ambientais

## Introduction

Human, the environment, culture, and economy are always interacted with each other. Therefore, a change in one of the rings of the chain will affect the others. As a result of the rise in world population and the rapid development of information and technology, there is an increase in human demands. The uncontrolled use of technology to eradicate such needs cause damages to natural resources which end in increasing negative effects on the environment (Özer, 1991; Yılmaz et al, 2002).

The individuals who are the factors in environmental problems should be aware of their responsibilities towards eradicating such problems. This can only be overcome by effective environmental education (Altın et al, 2002; Soran, 2000)

The basic condition for a healthy societal structure is sound human relationship and equality in income distribution as well as the preservation of natural, cultural and aesthetic environment. The issue of the claim to be the owner of the environment as a whole at societal and universal level, becoming more aware of the problems, seeking ways to solve the problems and emphasizing that the world is the common heritage for the human were first pronounced in the 1960s. Environmental problem is, more than anything else, a result of the decisions for a better environment and more productivity or the needs of today's and the future generations. The failure in the evaluation of national resources for the benefit of the country and the insensitiveness towards the environment and the lack of cooperation and peaceable dialogues caused the environmental problems to reach to dangerous levels. At the same time, all the environmental problems emerge due to indifferent human behaviors and the failure in informing people about these problems make the people feel indifferent towards the events which, in their opinion, do not interest them. Raising environmental awareness and sensitivity, provides a healthier and safer environment for people to survive and this will only be achieved through educational education to raise individuals with the required and sufficient skills. Meanwhile, an education system which does not respond to how to form behaviors towards the

environment and how to change the unwanted behaviors will not bring about any success (Zare & Zade, 2014; Adedeji, 2018).

A direct relation has been observed between environmental problems and environmental education and sensitivity, The sufficiency of individual sensitivity and the education received can't be undervalued in solving environmental problems (Çabuk & Karacaoğlu, 2003). If people are well informed about the importance of the natural environment, the functions of education, and if their sensitivity towards environmental problems is increased and they made active participants, there will be a great step towards minimizing the multiple environmental problems (Yangın & İşcen, 2013; Kuhlemeir et al, 1999). Therefore, when the tight relation among environmental education, sensitivity, and problems are considered, it is of crucial importance that students' views about environmental problems, their level of awareness, perceptions, their level of information, and educational needs are specified. This study investigated Fine Arts students' views related to environmental problems and sought answers to the following questions;

- What is your perception of the environment?
- What are your suggestions related to solving environmental problems?

Do you participate in any environmental activities?

## Methodology

**- Research Method.** This study was based on a qualitative research method. A qualitative research is defined as "the process in which data collection methods, such as observation, interview, and document analysis were used to specify perceptions and events in a natural environment in reality and unity. In this research, the interview method, one of the methods used in qualitative researches to collect data. "Interview is the most frequently used qualitative methods. It is quite an effective method in revealing one's point of views, experiences, feelings, and

perceptions” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011; Murzinova et al, 2018).

**- The Participants.** 25 fine Arts Teaching students in the universities in North Cyprus participated in this research. Because the aim of this research was to reach all the participants, additional sampling was not referred to.

**- Data Collection Techniques and the Process.** The data was collected through interview method, in which a semi-structured interview technique was conducted. In this technique, the researcher prepares the interview protocol in advance with the questions planned to be asked. Even though, the researcher may affect the running of the interview by side or sub questions and may ask the participant to expand and get down to the details of his/her responses (Türkmen, 2000).

A semi-structured interview form was used in the process. The literature was scanned and the questions were improved, pre-meetings were held and necessary arrangement were done in the light of experts’ suggestions. The interviews were done between April 30 and June 30, at the convenience of the students. The interviews took about 60 minutes. The aim and the way the interview would be done was specified by the researcher during the interview. It was noted that the students gave more detailed answers towards the end of the interview.

**- Data Analysis.** Data analysis was done with the sub-problems of the research in mind. The basic procedure in content analysis is to gather the similar data into certain concepts and themes and to arrange them in a way for the reader to understand and interpret (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). The participants were shown in numbers from 1 to 25 (S1, S2, S3.....). The data obtained from the interview forms were primarily recorded onto the computer. The data reached

during the analysis process were put into meaningful sections. These sections were coded and categories forming the findings were formed (Wyrasti et al., 2019).

**- Validity and Reliability.** For the validity of this research, information was collected from the participants in face –to-face meetings and results were reached in the light of their remarks. A detailed report of the data collected and the researchers’ explanations of how results are reached are important criterion for validity in a qualitative research (Yıldırım&Şimşek, 2011). In qualitative researches, the most useful method to raise reliability is controlling the members. In this method, the researchers give their notes to the participants, who confirm the records as complete and correct (Büyüköztürk et al., 2011). The records taken during the research for reliability were read by the participants after the meetings. They were asked for any additions or deletions and the final arrangements were done for final approval. The participant should present all the data obtained through meetings, observations, and documents, without any interpretation, and ask for comments at the end (Yıldırım&Şimşek, 2011). In the research, the remarks were directly referred to and the data were presented through a descriptive approach.

### Findings

This section deals with the findings obtained from the participants and their interpretation at the end of the analysis of the data in the direction of the aims of this study.

**- DIMENSION I:** What is your perception of environmental problems? In this dimension, 25 participants were asked about their aims to specify their thoughts. The Fine Arts students’ thoughts are shown under rates and themes in Table 1.

Table 1. Views about environmental problems

Participants			
Themes	Number of Students		Percentage (%)
Lack of awareness of the people	25	15	%60
Environmental insensitivity	25	10	%40
<b>Total number and %</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>%100</b>

The students expressed their views about the subject question and stated that %60 of the people were not aware of the problem and %40 were insensitive towards the environment.

One of the university students expressed thoughts saying, “The people are not well aware of the environment, which is the only place they live in, and use it unconsciously. Whereas, they should know that such behaviors will be the end of the world. Just as they do not think of themselves, they do not care much about the future generations (I:S(25))”.

Another participant student remarked, “One wants to eat fruit in every season. Today, there is a lot of hormone in fruit and vegetables, the soil is polluted, for the sake of smelling nice, people use a lot of perfume, they depleted the ozone layer, engine has been invented to facilitate life, the environment is distracted, and we never cared about the nature. We dispose batteries in the soil and pollute it because it can not degrade them. The soil breaks dead creatures into pieces and absorbs them, but the substances that can not be broken into pieces pollute the soil (I:S(1))”.

Other participant expressed worries saying, “We waste a lot of water while doing washing at home. Human beings are the ones who pollute the environment the most. Although they are well

aware that one day they will be living in litter, they still do not care much about such a danger. Animals are more careful about this issue. They do not harm the environment. They bury their feces into the soil, which in time turn into fertilizers (I:S(13))”.

The first dimension of the research was to specify students’ views about environmental problems. At the end of the research, it was noted that students related various environmental problems with each other. This indicates that the students related the concepts to do with environmental problems correctly and that they are well aware of the human factor in the problem. The students who had negative views about human factor, pointed to disposal of litter in the environment as the problem. This perception, as a result, indicates that the findings of this research are consistent. Similar findings are seen in the literature, which point to human beings as the reasons for environmental problems (Demirbaş & Pektaş, 2009., Sadık et al., 2011., Yardımcı & Bağcı Kılıç, 2010).

**- DIMENSION II: What are your suggestions for preventing environmental problems?** The students’ opinions about the question in Dimension II are shown under rates and themes in Table 2.

Table 2. Views about solutions to prevent environmental problems

<b>Participants</b>			
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>		<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Ignoring the environment lived in	25	19	%76
Organizing seminars, projects etc. to do with the environment	25	6	%24
<b>Total number and %</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>%100</b>

%76 of the students responded to the question on their perceptions of the environment and their gainings from to the environment saying, “We do not care about the environment we live in” and %24 of them responded saying, “the deterioration of the environment”.

One of the participant expressed views saying, “People do not know much about the environment they live in and the emerging problems that they disturb the the environment. Apart from this, problems emerge because the people do not take environmental organization

and hygiene seriously. Obviously, environmental awareness can not be limited just by teaching about the environment. It should be integrated into other subjects and we should be assigned various projects and studies. It seems that global warming will be the basic factor to change the human destiny in the future. Therefore, environmental problems should not be considered as the least dangerous issue, but should be looked into as big problems and ways to solve it should be sought (I:S (15))”.

Another participant explained thoughts saying, "It has become difficult for all living creatures to live in such a spoiled natural environment. This reminds me of environmental pollution. We are the ones that cause this. There are so many carefree people around. This should be ended. Applied projects and seminars should organized and shared at schools. Volunteers in this subject should not only put up posters, but they should involve university students by assigning them project, which is assumed to be more effective. Students should witness the size of environmental problems through visuals, films etc. In addition, we should be informed about this issue so that we can educate our students in the schools where we will be working (I:S (3))".

Other participant expressed views saying, "I do not think environmental problems create a big threat for human life. Because the people and the authorities are not careful about this issue, the problems expand to further unwanted limits. This does not only affect only human life, but also

harms the environment of all living creatures and as a result deteriorates the ecological balance. It is absolutely necessary that people should be made aware of the environmental problems (I:S (6))".

In the second dimension of this study a big majority of the university students studying Fine Arts explained environmental problems as the harm given to societal life. The students mostly complained about unconsciousness and insensitiveness in relation to the harm given to the community. In this respect, university students stress that human beings are the sources of environmental problems. Yalçınkaya & Çelikbaş (2013) reached similar findings in which environmental problems were assumed as the most important problems.

- **DIMENSION III. Participating in environmental activities?** The students' views in Dimension II are given under rates and themes in Table 3.

Table 3. Views about participating in environmental activities

<b>Participants</b>			
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>		<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Throwing litter around and keeping the environment clean	25	7	%28
None of the activities	25	18	%72
<b>Total number and %</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>%100</b>

The students were asked to express views about their perception of the environment and their gains related to the environment. 28% of them admitted participating in keeping the environment clean by not disposing litter on the ground and 27% admitted that they did not participate in any activities related to the environment.

One of participant explained views as, "I participated in the activity related to keeping the environment clean. Apart from this, we walked around our environment etc (I:S (12))".

Another participant expressed thoughts saying, "I did not participate in any activities to do with the environment at university, but when in high school, we used to collect the litter scattered around our school and try to keep our environment clean and tidy (I:S (6))".

Other participant emphasized and said, "No any activities or studies to do with the environment took place in our school (I:S (23))".

In the third dimension of the research, the students admitted that they hardly participated in any activities organized to do with the environment in or out of school. Çabuk & Karacaoğlu (2003) found out in their study that very few students always participated in such studies.

### Discussion and Conclusion

This research aimed at specifying university students' perception of the environment. In this respect, their views were examined. The findings obtained can be summarized as: a big majority of the university students perceived environmental problems as giving harm to societal life. In this theme, the students mostly complained about

insensitivity and unconsciousness which, for the students, is an indication of human factor in environmental problems.

The students blamed individuals and units for the problems, except themselves, and their suggestions focused on the measures individuals and units should take. On the other hand, it is clearly understood that the suggestions put forward by the students are not sustainable. In the vision of the renewed programme of Science Teaching (2013), environmental awareness is emphasized the gainings from science-technology-community-environment issues. Therefore, this research revealed that the students failure in suggesting solutions for environmental problems indicates their insufficient knowledge in this issue.

Another finding is that the students participation in environmental activities is not sufficient. They do not find the activities interesting and admit that there are not effective activities in this area. In their study, Uluçınar-Sağır, Aslan&Cansaran (2008) and Kahyaoğlu & Özgen (2011) found out that students' participation in environmental studies was at a low level. On the other hand, Şimşekli (2004) stated in a study that students were not interested in environmental studies. Therefore, uninteresting environmental activities and the lack of sufficient activities at schools can be accounted as the important reasons for the students for not participating in the activities. At the end of this research, it was noted that the Fine Arts students had an average attitudes towards the environment

## Reference

- Adedeji, T. (2018). Revitalizing Mathematics Education Preparation in Nigeria for National Development: An Innovative View. *International Electronic Journal of Mathematics Education*, 13(3), 315-320.
- Altın, M., Bacanlı, H., Yıldız, K. (2002). Biology teacher candidates' attitudes towards the environment. Presented at the V. National Science and Mathematics Congress, METU, Ankara.
- Büyüköztürk, Ş., Çakmak, K. E., Akgün, Ö. E., Karadeniz, Ş., Demirel, F. (2011). *Scientific research methods*. Ankara: Pegem Academy.
- Çabuk, B., Karacaoğlu, C. (2003). Investigation of environmental sensitivities of university students. *Ankara University, Journal of Educational Sciences*, 36(1), 190-198.
- Demirbaş, M., Pektaş, H. M. (2009). The level of primary school students' realization of basic concepts related to environmental problem. *Necatibey Education Faculty, Journal of Electronic Science and Mathematics Education* 3(2), 195-211.
- Kahyaoğlu, M., Özgen, N. (2011). Evaluating the environmental attitudes of primary school students living in rural areas in terms of various variables and opinions about environmental problems. *Cukurova University, Journal of Education Faculty*, 40(3), 102-115.
- Kuhlemeier, H., Bergh, H., Lagerweij, N. (1999). Environmental knowledge, attitudes, and behavior in Dutch secondary education. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 30(2), 4-14.
- Özer, U. (1991). Environmental philosophy within the relationships of humanity, environment, culture and economy. *Man and the Environment Conference Proceedings*, 1, 318-321.
- Özer, U. (1991). *Environmental Education. Preliminary Symposium on Environmental Pollution in Turkey*, 21-22. Istanbul.
- Sadık, F., Çakan, H., Artut, K. (2011). Analysis of environmental problems reflected in children's pictures according to socio-economic differences. *Elementary Education Online*, 10(3), 1066-1080.
- Soran, H., Morgil, İ., Alev, E., Işık, S. (2000). Investigation of biology students' environmental issues and comparison with chemistry students. *Hacettepe University, Journal of Education Faculty*, 18, 128-139.
- Şimşekli, Y. (2004). Sensitivity of primary schools to environmental education events for the development of environmental awareness. *Uludağ University, Journal of Education Faculty*, 17(1), 83-92.
- Murzinova, K. E. A., Koblanova, A., & Ansabayeva, D. A. A. (2018). Prosodical means applied in communicative relations. *Opción*, 34(85-2), 61-96.
- Türnüklü, A. (2000). A Qualitative Research Technique to be Effectively Used in Educational Research: Interview. *Theory and Practice in Education Management*, 24, 543- 559.
- Uluçınar S. Ş., Aslan, O., Cansaran, A. (2008). Investigation of Environmental Information and Environmental Attitudes of Primary School Students in Terms of Different Variables. *Primary Education Online*, 7(2), 496-511.
- Yardımcı, E., Bağcı-Kılıç G. (2010). Environmental and environmental problems for children. *Primary Education Online*, 9(3), 1122-1136.
- Wyrasti, A. F., Sa'dijah, C., As'ari, A. R., & Sulandra, I. M. (2019). The Misanalogical Construction of Undergraduate Students in Solving Cognitive Conflict Identification Task. *International Electronic Journal of Mathematics Education*, 14(1), 33-47.

Yalçinkaya T., Çelikbaş A. (2013). Solving of environmental problems of children. III International Geography Symposium-GEOMED, 619-625. Antalya.

Yangın, S., Filik-İşçen, C. (2013). Environmental education: Current situation and living problems (Example of University of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and University of Eskişehir Osmangazi). *Journal of Social Science*, 12(46), 131-150.

Yılmaz, A., Morgil, İ., Aktuğ, P., Göbekli, İ. (2002). Suggestions about environment,

environment concepts and problems of secondary school and university students. Hacettepe Üniversitesi, *Journal of Education Faculty*, 22, 156-162.

Yıldırım, A., Şimşek, H. (2011). *Qualitative research methods in the social sciences*. Ankara: Sechkin Publishing.

Zare, H., & Zade, A. R. S. (2014). The Application of Tichy's Model In Iranian Public Universities, *UCT Journal of Management and Accounting Studies*, 2(1): 8-13.